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I am very sorry I cannot be present at the dinner of the Judicial Settlement Society on Saturday evening of this week. While I favored strongly the general arbitration treaties with Great Britain and France which were submitted by me to the Senate, my whole ideal is that of an arbitral court for the settlement of international controversies, and I favored the general arbitration treaties as a long step toward an arbitral court whose jurisdiction should be increased ultimately to include all possible disputes of an international character. Such a court is the natural outgrowth of treaties of general arbitration between all the nations of the world, and it represents the ultimate goal toward which we should be tending. With the hope that the meeting this year may be as successful as in the past, and may give an additional impetus to the cause, believe me,

Sincerely yours,
WM. H. TAFT.

The society has chosen to limit itself to a small portion of a large field, but in doing so it brings together distinguished lawyers and judges who see in the judicial settlement of international disputes the hope of international peace. The proceedings of the first annual meeting have, it is believed, crystalized sentiment in favor of a permanent international court and, printed in an attractive volume, they have been widely read not only at home but abroad, and have been much quoted by foreign publicists. The present addresses and discussions will, when published, be a further and not less valuable contribution to the general subject, for to operate successfully a court must have law, and the essentials of this law must be known and understood in advance.

The officers elected for the ensuing year are the Hon. Joseph H. Choate of New York, President; Dr. Charles W. Eliot of Cambridge, Mass., Vice President; Mr. James Brown Scott of Washington, D. C., Secretary; Mr. J. G. Schmidlapp of Cincinnati, Ohio, Treasurer.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

The Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law will be held, as usual, at Washington during the last week of April (April 24-26, 1913) ending with the customary dinner on the evening of the 26th. The Program Committee has decided to devote the sessions to two subjects: (1) The international use of straits and canals; (2) consideration and discussion of the report of the Committee on Codification. The latter subject has occupied the attention of the Society for the past three years, and it is believed that the committee will be in a position

to report very considerable progress as to the methods and principles of codification.

The subject is peculiarly timely, because it is exactly fifty years to the day since the first successful piece of codification of a branch of international law was undertaken and published; namely, *Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field*, issued as General Orders No. 100 on April 24, 1863, and prepared by Francis Lieber, then professor at Columbia College. The president's address, which will be delivered on the evening of April 24, will deal with Dr. Lieber's services to international law and the importance of the instructions which, as is well known, served as the basis of the Declaration of Brussels and influenced profoundly the codification of the usages and customs of war on land adopted by the First Hague Peace Conference of 1899 and revised by the Second Conference of 1907. Mr. Root's address therefore will very properly commemorate the publication of the instructions which mark a date in the development of international law.

The first subject is no less timely, for the international use of straits and canals is a matter of the greatest moment not merely to theorists of international law, but to the business of the world. The opening of the Panama Canal would alone justify a theoretical and practical consideration of this topic, but the controversy concerning the conditions upon which vessels are to be permitted to use it makes a consideration of the whole question almost a matter of necessity. The committee in charge of the program is unwilling to have the Panama question discussed in a partisan spirit and dissociated from the broad question of the international use of straits and canals in general. The entire subject will be presented, not merely the problems concerning the Panama Canal. Care will be taken to have papers prepared by competent publicists dealing with what may be called the national as distinguished from the international aspects of the case, so that the proceedings will furnish a conspectus of scientific thought on the international use of connecting bodies of water, natural as well as artificial. It is hoped that the discussions of the members attending will be as interesting and valuable as the formal papers and that the proceedings will be a contribution to the subject.